

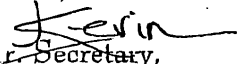


*Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C. 20515*

*Anna G. Estoo
Fourteenth District
California*

July 31, 2003

The Honorable Kevin Shelley, Secretary of State
State of California
1500 11th Street
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Mr.  Secretary,

I'm writing to urge you to add a voter-verifiable audit trail requirement for electronic ("direct recording electronic" or DRE) voting machines before the next federal election in 2004.

The fundamental and essential way the people participate in government is through voting, but without the confidence of the people in the collection and tabulation of their ballots; the strength of the electoral system, of our government institutions, and of democracy itself is diminished. Nothing, therefore, is more important than the sanctity of each voter's ballot.

Our nation's history has been marked by elections which have been called into question because of the manipulation of weaknesses in voting systems. That's why we must continually work to guarantee the highest degree of integrity in the election process.

To address the problems in voting systems that became apparent after the 2000 Presidential Election, I cosponsored and voted for the *Help America Vote Act*, which established minimum federal standards for elections including the elimination of punch-card voting machines and increased access for individuals with disabilities through electronic voting.

The enactment of the *Help America Vote Act* was essential to restoring voter-confidence after 2000. However, since enactment of the law, my constituents, local governments, and leading experts in the field of computer science have expressed concern about the inherent flaws that make DRE voting machines susceptible to manipulation. These concerns have led me to cosponsor H.R. 2239, the *Voter Confidence and Increased Accessibility Act* to enhance the reforms of the *Help America Vote Act*. The legislation requires a voter-verifiable audit trail for voting machines by 2004. As you know, experts on the technology used to run these machines have said a "paper trail" is the only sure safeguard against the manipulation of DRE machines. I'm enclosing a copy of the legislation for your perusal and I'm also enclosing a July 23, 2003 report titled "Analysis of an Electronic Voting System" by computer scientists from Johns Hopkins University and Rice University, who highlighted possible threats to a system produced by one of the leading DRE machine manufacturers.

I understand that the implementation of a paper trail may create new challenges for the vital task of improving voting access for individuals with disabilities, but I'm confident that with the proper attention, we can both enhance access for individuals with disabilities and safeguard the integrity of our voting systems.

In the end, the sanctity of the voting process depends upon the capable individuals who administer elections. State and local election officials along with volunteers perform some of the most important (and most underappreciated) jobs for our state and nation. They do their jobs with skill and honor. I want to commend you in particular for your efforts to reform election systems in California and to acknowledge your effort to address the issue of voting system security by creating the Ad Hoc Touch Screen Task Force Report and by offering the public an opportunity to comment.

Sincerely, *and all my best,*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anna G. Eshoo', written over a horizontal line.

Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress

Enclosures